

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 501

By Cooper

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Mrs. Frances Dancy Hooks of Memphis.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Mrs. Frances Dancy Hooks, longtime civil rights activist and widow of Dr. Benjamin L. Hooks; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Hooks leaves behind a legacy of activism devoted to improving education, race relations, and women's rights in Memphis and across the nation; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Hooks has been described as "the perfect spouse, First Lady of the NAACP and Greater Middle Baptist Church, civil rights leader, and citizen of Memphis"; and

WHEREAS, Dr. and Mrs. Hooks enjoyed a long and happy marriage, and together they formed an incredible team; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Hooks, who passed away in 2010, was the first African-American commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission and later served as executive director of the NAACP from 1977 to 1992; Mrs. Hooks was cofounder of Women in the NAACP (WIN), a program that addresses civil rights issues affecting women and children; and

WHEREAS, "a powerful leader with a big heart," Mrs. Hooks cofounded the Memphis Volunteer Placement Program (now the Memphis Prep Program), which helped black students apply for financial aid for college, complete college applications, and explore career options, and was also a founding member of the Women's Foundation of Greater Memphis; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of Booker T. Washington High School, Mrs. Hooks earned a bachelor's degree from Fisk University and a master's degree from Tennessee State University; and

WHEREAS, she began her twenty-four-year career as an educator in Memphis, but later served as secretary and adviser to her husband, whom she affectionately called "the Catch of Memphis"; and

WHEREAS, this remarkable lady is survived by her daughter, Patricia Hooks Gray; two grandsons; and two great-grandsons; and

WHEREAS, Frances Hooks leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all her chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should remember the bountiful life of this exemplary civil rights leader; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory and celebrate the life of Frances Dancy Hooks, reflecting fondly upon her passion for equality and educational opportunity for all citizens.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family and many friends and colleagues of Mrs. Hooks.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.